



# PRESS RELEASE

MISS. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS \* 723 N. PRESIDENT ST. \* JACKSON, MS 39202 \* (601)359-5600 \* (FAX: 5738)

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Contact: Claire Papizan  
Phone: (601) 359-5689  
Fax: (601) 359-5738

## **MDOC Region III Community Services Division Employees Receive Employee Recognition/Service Awards**

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Leakesville – The employee recognition awards ceremony for the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) Community Services Division Region III was held Tuesday at South Mississippi Correctional Institution (SMCI) in Leakesville, Miss. At the ceremony, three employees received employee recognition awards.

In addition, six community services employees were recognized for their years of service to MDOC. Constance Taylor, Community Services Director for Region III, announced the names of the employees celebrating service anniversaries while Deputy Commissioner Lora Cole and Commissioner Robert Johnson presented each with certificates. Community Services Region III employees that reached a milestone in service years during first quarter include:

Name	Hometown	Years of Service
Gertrude Croon	Moss Point	15
Kevin Tatum	Lucedale	15
Robert Cherry	Columbia	10
Melanie Schurb	Hattiesburg	10
Darlene May	Lucedale	5
Patrick White	Petal	5

“As we build our professionalism in the field of corrections we have to be mindful that the quality of the work we perform will come back to us and be our legacy,” said Commissioner Johnson. “The quality of your work that we honor today and that you have earned is one of dedication to providing public safety to the state of Mississippi.”

Taylor announced the names of the employees receiving recognition awards while Johnson and Cole presented each with certificates and lapel pins. The recognition award recipients were:

George Lander	Jackson County Community Work Center	Correctional Officer of the Month Award
Elson Cody	Harrison County Probation & Parole Office	Field Officer of the Month Award
Terri Foss	Jackson County Community Work Center	Extra Effort Award

(more)

The MDOC Employee Service Award Program originated in July 2001 to nominate fellow MDOC employees for the following awards:

- Correctional Officer of the Month;
- Field Officer of the Month;
- Staff Employee of the Month; and
- Security Employee of the Month.

In addition, MDOC established the Heroism Award and Extra Effort Award. The Heroism Award is given to employees who go above and beyond the call of duty in heroic efforts to either save the life on an individual or prevent other lives from dangerous situations. The Extra Effort Award is designed to recognize employees who go the extra mile or take on additional duties to assist in a project in order to get it done.

MDOC holds ceremonies each month to officially recognize outstanding employees at all three state institutions (Mississippi State Penitentiary in Parchman, Miss; Central Mississippi Correctional Facility in Pearl, Miss; and South Mississippi Correctional Institution in Leakesville, Miss.) and at the MDOC central office in Jackson.

#### **Community Services Division Service Award Recipients**

**George Lander**, Correctional Officer IV of Pascagoula, works at the Jackson County Community Work Center in Pascagoula, Miss. Lander was nominated for the Correctional Officer of the Month Award by Betsy Chandler, the director of the Jackson County Community Work Center. Lander was nominated because of his reputation of always going above and beyond the call of duty; he is also known for working on his days off when needed.

“Officer Lander never complains about any task he is assigned and he takes pride in his work,” said Chandler. “If he sees something that needs to be done, he does it without waiting to be asked.”

**Elson Cody**, of Bay St. Louis, is a Field Officer III at the Harrison County Probation and Parole Office in Biloxi, Miss. Cody was nominated for the Field Officer of the Month Award by Ruth West, Branch Director. West, who is over the Intensive Supervision Program (ISP) at MDOC, nominated Officer Cody because of his organizational abilities, can-do attitude, work ethic and attention to detail.

“Officer Cody makes a very significant contribution to the productivity and efficiency of the ISP program with his willingness to help with various assignments and professional attitude,” said West.

**Terri Foss**, of Gulfport, is a Correctional Officer I at the Jackson County Community Work Center in Pascagoula, Miss. Foss was nominated for an Extra Effort Award by Betsy Chandler, the director of the Jackson County Community Work Center.

“Officer Foss takes it upon herself to go the extra mile and to ensure that the Jackson County Community Work Center is run efficiently,” said Chandler. “It is my privilege to have her on my staff.”

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MEDIA NOTE: MDOC has digital photos of award recipients. If you are interested in receiving a photo, please call Kent Crocker at (601) 359-5616 or e-mail him at [kcrocker@mdoc.state.ms.us](mailto:kcrocker@mdoc.state.ms.us)